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### **Campaign helps people spot, deal with abuse**

A campaign is being launched to help neighbours, friends and families recognize signs of abuse of women and know what action to take.

The Neighbours, Friends and Families campaign will provide information and strategies to help prevent abuse. It will include tools and educational activities to help people recognize warning signs, support those abused or impacted by abuse and locate supportive resources in the community.

Dale Kenney, of the Women In Crisis (Algoma) Inc., a representative on the Algoma Council on Domestic Violence, said literature has been produced for area service agencies and will be displayed throughout the community.

There will be a presentation on the program Dec. 6 at the Algoma Council on Domestic Violence general meeting, she said.

"Posters are being put up and we're trying to spread our message," Kenney said. It's hoped that once service agency providers are trained, the message will spread throughout the community and into the educational system.

Neighbours, Friends and Families was developed as a result of a Coroner's Death Review Committee that studied domestic murders and reviewed commonality between them.

It found that neighbours, friends and families who were aware of domestic violence in a relationship, either chose not to do anything about it or didn't know who to contact or what to do.

"This is designed to fill that gap," Kenney said.

In 2006, the Sault Ste. Marie Police Service responded to 1,201 domestic calls. As well, 8,059 women and children accessed domestic violence programs and the Children's Aid Society investigated 226 cases for domestic violence in 2006.

Connie Nadeau, council co-chair, notes in a press release that family violence can damage children's emotional growth and their belief that the world is a safe place.

"The Neighbours, Friends and Families concept lets us know that we each have an opportunity to intervene at some level. We can each find our strength to combat what seems so insurmountable."